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Franz Schubert.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

From the German of Dr. HEINRICH VON KREISLE.

(Continued from page 115.)

We continue the list of Schubert's operatic compositions.

8. "*Die Zwillinge*" (The Twins), farce with singing, in one act.

This was performed for the first time at Vogl's suggestion, in the Kärnthnerthor theatre, on the 14th of June 1820,—that is, at a time when none of Schubert's songs had yet been published.

The subject of the libretto, taken from the French, is one that has been pretty well used up upon the stage; (the two Dromios, for instance). The twin brothers, being continually taken for each other, deceive themselves and others, which leads to many comical effects,—but commonly also to a flat conclusion. Vogl had undertaken the part of both twins, the military invalid and the countryman, Franz and Friedrich Spiess, and did his best to keep them properly distinct. The music interested on the whole; the introductory chorus had to be repeated; also the Aria in C of one of the twins found response. At the end of the piece the people clapped, and desired to see the composer, in whose place, as he was absent, Vogl returned thanks.

The critics called the little opera a pretty trifle, the production of a young composer, who, as the pure style of the work showed, must have made a regular course of study and was no novice in harmony. To be sure, they went on to say, the music here and there is antiquated and even unmelodious; and it is to be hoped, that the composer will not have misunderstood the compliment of the friends, who called him out.

The performance was on the whole satisfactory; but a lasting influence was not produced, owing perhaps partly to the libretto. The operetta was given six times, and then vanished from the repertoire forever.

9. On the 19th of August 1820 the following notice appeared in the *Belletristische Blätter* of Vienna:

"The liberality of his excellency, Count Ferdinand von Palffy, proprietor of the royal imperial privileged Theatre on the Wien, has offered a benefit to three artists, the terms of whose engagement promise them but little income. These artists are: Herren Neefe, scene painter, Roller, machinist, and Lucca Piazza, costumer of the aforesaid theatre, who are all highly deserving of such a distinction. This benefit is fixed for next Monday, the 21st of August, at the third representation of the new magical play in three acts: '*Die Zauberharfe*' (The Magic Harp), music by Herr Schubert, decorations, machinery and costumes by the beneficiaries."

Schubert had been invited by Neefe and the *regisseur* of the theatre, Demmer, to write the music to this melodrama by an unknown author. He immediately consented, and had it ready in

a couple of weeks. On the 19th of August 1820 the opera was put upon the stage, and was moderately successful. It was given several times, but vanished from the repertoire again before the beginning of the winter. It contained but few solo songs: choruses and melodrama were the principal ingredients. Here again the text-book was altogether worthless, in fact silly, and displeased the audience decidedly.

The Overture, a very interesting, characteristic orchestra piece, was the one, which has appeared in a piano-forte arrangement as op. 26, erroneously entitled the overture to the Drama *Rosamund*. A very beautiful solo piece is the tenor romanza of the Palmer, which was sung by Franz Jäger. It is an *Andantino* in D major, with accompaniment of violins, viola, flute, oboe, bassoon, harp, cello and bass.

The critics fell unmercifully upon the insipid text-book of this spectacle piece, but also found many a fault to expose in the music: above all, that the music rather hindered than furthered the action, and that it betrayed the composer's utter ignorance of the rules of the melodrama. The taste of the spirit harp music too was frequently thin, *fade* and obsolete; it lacked the necessary energy and characteristic quality, which even spirits of the air cannot dispense with. The *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* gave the following opinion of it: "The setting betrays talent here and there; as a whole it lacks technical arrangement, lacks that general oversight, which is to be gained only by experience. Most of it is much too long and fatiguing; the harmonic progressions too harsh, the instrumentation overlaid, the choruses flat and feeble. The introductory Adagio of the overture and the tenor romanza are the most successful movements, and appeal by their heartfelt expression, noble simplicity and tender modulation. An idyllic subject must suit the composer uncommonly well," &c.

These contemporary critical judgments may be true as far as they go; but if one reads them all through, he cannot help perceiving in them a certain prepossession on the part of the reviewer against the young composer, who until then had only come before the public with some small musico-dramatic attempts. These gentlemen seem to have had no presentiment of the rapidly unfolding greatness of "the agreeable song composer," Schubert; and yet it stands upon the evidence of competent judges of music, who were present at the performance, that the music, which Schubert had to compose to a most senseless piece, contained single movements, vocal and instrumental, of great interest.

10. On the 20th of June 1821 was given in the Kärnthnerthor theatre:

"*Das Zaubererglöcken*" (the Magic Bells, *Les Clochettes*), an opera in three acts, after the French of Theaulon; music by Herold.

This opera, as the title intimates, was another magical piece. Schubert had composed two numbers in it, a tenor aria for Azolin (sung by Ros-

ner), and a comic duet of Prince Bedur and Zedir (performed by Siebert and Gottdank). Herold's music did not please particularly on the whole; once missed in the music the ring of the fairy world. The only fault found with the tenor air composed by Schubert was, that it lay too high and fatigued the voice exceedingly. But the duet was acknowledged as the most successful piece of the second act. The pausing of the second voice, and its sudden entrance again at the words: "We'll break his neck," made it irresistibly comical.

This opera was given eight times in the year 1821, and then disappeared from the repertoire. The authorship of the two pieces just referred to was carefully concealed from the public; and the young composer had a little triumph over those who were already beginning to disparage his songs, and especially to deny him any talent for operatic music. The two pieces, which Schubert composed, pleased decidedly the best of all.

(To be continued.)

The Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace

(From the London Times.)

FIRST DAY, TUESDAY, JUNE 24.

The Messiah inaugurated the Handel Festival yesterday morning in the most brilliant manner. Between 15,000 and 16,000 persons were comfortably seated shortly after the performance had begun, and never, perhaps, has the great centre transept of the Crystal Palace presented a more gay and animated appearance. The weather was most propitious—a matter of real importance on such festive occasions, when thousands meet together for the purpose of enjoyment, inasmuch as if they arrive at their destination in comfort they are all the more disposed to appreciate with hearty unanimity the treat in store for them.—To hear *The Messiah* under such conditions as those of yesterday is a very different thing from hearing it in the atmosphere of a close and heated room. We think we may safely say that, though the oratorio did not terminate until at least one hour later than had been anticipated (5 o'clock instead of 4), no one felt in the least fatigued, no one at all regretted the four hours (allowing for the interval between the parts) spent in listening to so unprecedentedly fine a performance of the grandest of sacred oratorios. And, certainly the immortal masterpiece of Handel, take it for all in all, was, without exaggeration, never at any time within our experience so nobly executed as yesterday. The orchestra, now—after so many experiments, such earnest and diligent enquiry—thoroughly completed, has more than answered expectation. It is not so much that the volume of sound has increased—there was, indeed no want of that—as that by a most ingenious expedient, the concentration of sound has been insured. Thus, while the extensive reverberation formerly complained of is almost wholly done away with, we have, in place of it, a sharpness of definition and clearness of detail, permitting each separate part of the vocal and instrumental score to be easily and distinctly recognized. In an oratorio like *The Messiah*, which abounds in elaborate fugal writing, this is of the utmost consequence; and yesterday the marked improvement was the subject of general comment.

To invent words for a new description of *The*

Messiah, under whatever conditions it may be given, is somewhat difficult, every part of the oratorio being more or less familiar to music, and, indeed, to a large majority of non-musical readers. Such an execution as that of yesterday in the Crystal Palace, however, could scarcely fail to offer new points for comment; and, indeed, were the space available, we might fill columns with a description of it. Not that it was faultless—that would be overstating the truth; but that there was a freshness about it to distinguish it altogether from ordinary performances, even from the best at the great country music meetings, and at the concerts of the Sacred Harmonic Society—the best of the best. The tone of the fiddles, in giving out and answering the fugal subject of the overture (second movement), was unprecedented in vigorous sonority. Then the brightness of the soprano voices, leading off the chorus, "And the glory of the Lord;" the multitudinous clamor of "He shall purify the sons of Levi"—where every part is important, and which the occasional "dragging" of the basses alone prevented from being irreproachable; and the precision, closeness, and energy which marked from end to end the delivery of that most picturesque chorus, "For unto us a child is born," alternately aroused attention, and, as one succeeded another, more and more deeply impressed all hearers. The superb execution of this last, indeed, was the theme of universal praise; not only for the way all the preceding and intervening sentences were taken up—and not the least admirable, the emphatic enunciation, by the tenors of the climax at "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," but for the crispness and delicacy of the passage, "And the government shall be upon His shoulder." The boisterous demand for a repetition of this chorus not being acceded to by Mr. Costa, a large portion of the "Pastoral Symphony"—descriptive of "the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night" (through which George III. declared he "could see the stars shining")—was entirely lost. The choruses of the second part, *The Passion*—though simpler, yet grander than Bach's profound and elaborate treatment of the subject—were no less finely given. "Behold the Lamb of God," "Surely He hath borne our griefs," "And with his stripes we are healed"—surpassing instances of pathos and sublimity; "All we like sheep have gone astray"—that wonderfully spirited and continuous movement, arraigned by shallow critics as an undignified piece of word-painting, while it is, in fact, as strictly appropriate to the text as any of the series of which it forms a component part, and from which it is virtually inseparable; and "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," with its stately, long, and measured phrase, as noble an example of full harmony as "And with His stripes" of fugue—one and all created an impression not to be effaced. Equally good, but for the fact of the bass voices being rather overweighted and disturbed than aided and supported by the big and loud brass instruments, placed in the midst—no doubt with a view of keeping them in countenance—would have been "He trusted in God," which, as far as music can convey what is presumed to be the exclusive privilege of words, is an expression of the deepest irony and scorn. "Lift up your heads," with its obstinately reiterated burden, "Who is the King of Glory?" was one of the brightest, clearest, and most splendid choral exhibitions of the day; while, singular enough, the clamorous outburst of the assembled nations, "Let us break their bonds asunder"—which, on account of its peculiar rhythm and almost (not to speak it profanely) *unnoccal* intervals, is invariably more or less of a failure—was given, as the phrase is, "without a hitch." One of the most characteristic choruses of the second part—"The Lord gave the word, great was the company of the preachers"—was unaccountably, and, as we cannot but think, in questionable taste, omitted. The culminating point, however, the chorus of choruses, the unequalled and magnificent "Hallelujah"—at the first familiar phrase of which, according to the immemorial habit, the whole of the vast assembly rose

—eclipsed everything that had gone before, and made us forget all about "the company of the preachers," all shortcomings, all objections, all criticism. This colossal hymn, and its almost equal in sublimity, while superior in complex, ingenious, and elaborate contrivance—"Worthy is the Lamb," with the stupendous "Amen," in which harmony towers above harmony, until the ear is perplexed and the mind absorbed in admiration at the genius that could conceive such a work, and with unflagging vigor and unexhausted invention climax it with such a chorus—were incontestably the "triumphs" of the day. To compare any performance of "Hallelujah" and "Worthy is the Lamb" with that of yesterday at the Crystal Palace is out of the question. It is a peculiarity of Handel that his compositions for the greater part, and especially his choruses, instead of losing, gain by accumulation of executive means; and never was this truth more thoroughly established than on the present occasion, when nearly 4,000 performers, vocal and instrumental, were engaged.

The solo singing was unexceptionable. The soprano music was shared between Miss Parepa, who took the first part, including the florid air, "Rejoice greatly," and Mlle. Titiens, who, in "How beautiful are the feet" and "I know that my Redeemer liveth," raised the audience to enthusiasm. The bass music was divided between Signor Belletti and Mr. Weiss, practised adepts in the Handelian school. Signor Belletti most particularly shone in the recitative air, "The people that walked in darkness," to which Mozart's additional accompaniments impart such wonderful interest, and the "Trumpet shall sound," in which the *obligato* accompaniment of Mr. T. Harper was, as usual, a conspicuous feature. Mr. Weiss produced an immense effect in "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" to which his noble voice is peculiarly suited. The contrast to was Mad. Sainton-Dolby, whose "He was despised," was, as it rarely fails to be, a masterpiece of pathos, and who in the tranquil and lovely pastoral, "He shall feed his flock," was admirably supported by Miss Parepa. The whole of the tenor part was allotted to Mr. Sims Reeves, to share it with whom would not be an enviable task. Mr. Reeves has seldom thrown more devotional fervor into "Comfort ye, my people," more fire into "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron," or given the fluently melodious "But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell" with chaster sentiment. His greatest effort, nevertheless, was the *Passion*-music, his delivery of which reached the ideal of expression.

SECOND DAY, THURSDAY, JUNE 26.

The second day began, as it ended—in triumph. Nothing more imposing could have been selected to head the miscellaneous programme than "We praise Thee, O God," from the "Te Deum" composed in 1748 for the victory of Dettingen. It was, moreover, in all respects well rendered—the full rich tones of the immense body of altos, in the opening of the movement, "All the earth doth worship Thee," the sonorous rejoinder of the basses ("Father Everlasting"), and the *fortissimo* with which the united vocal and instrumental host delivered the entire sentence, being especially worth notice. The extracts from *Samson* (written two years in anticipation of the "Te Deum") commenced with "Return, O God of Hosts," the tranquil character of which contrasted effectively with what had gone before. To this, and to the solos interspersed throughout the plaintive chorus (in the minor key)—"To dust his glory they would tread"—which is its pendant, Mad. Sainton-Dolby, with her pure "devotional" voice, did all possible justice. The whole, indeed, was admirable. "Let the bright Seraphim,"—that brilliant apostrophe to the "Cherubic host," in which the *obligato* trumpet plays so conspicuous and appropriate a part, came after the foregoing with exceeding brightness. This was sung with astonishing energy by Mlle. Titiens, whose high tones, penetrating everywhere, rivalled the clearness and sonority of Mr. T. Harper's trumpet. So enraptured were the audience, that, at the end of the first

part, without waiting for the second, they unanimously demanded a repetition, which was instantly accorded by Mr. Costa. At the "repeat," Mlle. Titiens restored the omitted portion. The magnificent chorus, "Let their celestial concerts all unite"—a continuation of the air, carrying out its poetical intention with the thousand-voiced energy of the choir, was also nobly executed. The difficulty is to imagine any other climax to *Samson* than this superb and graphic peroration. The capital war-song, in which Harapha the Philistine expresses his contempt for the Israelitish champion, although extremely well given by Sig. Belletti, a thorough master of the florid style, by the side of it was comparatively tame. It could hardly have been otherwise, even with a better singer than the Italian *basso*—supposing a better could be found. It had, however, been written by Judas Maccabæus, written to celebrate the victory of Culloden and the discomfiture of the Stuarts (frequently styled the "Jewish Oratorio," contributed the next items to this remarkable programme. The selection opened with "O Father, whose almighty power"—the petition of the Jews for a chieftain to conduct their wars. Not a fault could be found with this, the most characteristic feature of which—as far as the delivery went—was the passage,

"And grant a leader bold and brave,
If not to conquer, born to save."

with its emphatic reiteration of the first line—a striking example of Handel's genius in the picturesque employment of counterpoint. To Judas Maccabæus, who responds to the vows of his compatriots, the composer of the *Messiah* has allotted "Sound an Alarm"—perhaps the boldest war-song ever imagined. The glorious voice and dramatic energy of Mr. Sims Reeves have, for years, been inseparably connected with this, in its style, unequalled air, with which no one but himself in the memory of the present generation has been able successfully to cope. Mr. Reeves at the Handel Festival means always Mr. Reeves, proud of his laurels, anxious to retain, and, if possible, to add to them. This was proved, for the third time, yesterday, when "Sound an Alarm" proceeded from his lips with as much enthusiasm as if he had been the veritable "Judas" urging on his followers to victory or death. Nothing could have led up more vigorously to the climax, "We hear, we hear," where the people respond with acclamations to the martial ardor of their champion. The solo and chorus, as inspiring as ever, produced their wonted effect, and brought down a storm of applause. To encore so long and elaborate a piece was of course out of the question.

To *Judas* succeeded *Saul*—an oratorio composed eight years earlier. *Saul* was finished in September 1738, three days before the commencement of the immortal *Israel in Egypt*—or rather of the "Song of Moses" (*Exodus*), which now forms its second and concluding part. From *Saul* was taken one of the most wonderfully graphic of all the Handelian choruses, "Envy, eldest born of hell," which contains a passage,

"Hide thee in the blackest night,
Virtue sickens at thy sight."

expressive and significant enough to expel the demon of "envy" from the soul of whomsoever, not wholly callous, it might possess, and radically cure him of the fatal passion. The execution of this tremendous apostrophe may be cited among the most immaculate efforts of the "4,000." The renowned "Dead March" which followed, completing the excerpts from *Saul*, was indescribably touching and solemn—the more so on account of its immediate juxtaposition with a piece so opposed to its character. The band played the march to perfection, the wind instruments and the big drums of Mr. Chipp being delicately and gratefully subdued in the softer passages; while those marked *forte* were, in another sense, equally impressive, because never obstreperous. This unexceptionably interesting first part concluded with the solo and chorus (or, rather, chorus with solos) "As from the power of sacred lays"—from the setting of Dryden's *Ode on St Cecilia's Day*—to which we particularly called attention in our

report of the rehearsal. Mlle. Titiens gave the solos, if possible, with still greater purity and splendor of vocal tone than on the former occasion, producing a marked impression in the passage—

"The trumpet shall be heard on high,"

at the end of which she sustained, during several bars, a high "A," while the trumpet (Mr. T. Harper of course) echoed the phrase she had just delivered. Nothing could be more entirely satisfactory, nothing more genuine than this, or than the choral peroration,

"The dead shall live, the living die,
And music shall intune the sky."

perhaps the most tuneful fugue in existence, the melody—polyphonus melody, or melody in all the vocal parts—flowing on with such unrestricted grace and spontaneity that it is almost impossible to believe we are listening to a movement distinguished in every bar by intricate and scholarly treatment. Who will say that "fugue" and "counterpoint" are essentially dry and uninteresting after one hearing of this heavenly chorus—a fitting apostrophe to the "divine art," inasmuch as it is the essence of music from first to last? Handel did well to discard the setting of Dryden's contemporary, Giovanni Battista Draghi, and recompose *St. Cecilia* for his own satisfaction. Although the work was only a "ten days's labor," it was not the less a labor of love, and the music of Handel is as imperishable as the Ode itself.

Another "revival" (to which allusion was also made in noticing the rehearsal) immediately followed, and with the same success:—

"Tyrants now no more shall tread
On necks of vanquished slaves to tread."

—a sort of lament for the death of Hercules, a summing-up of the evils that must return and vex the earth, now that the strong-handed advocate of right is laid low. From beginning to end the chorus is in Handel's most energetic style, and, like its companion out of *St. Cecilia's Day*, altogether free from the conventional turns and faded "graces" of his period. The final passage—

"The world's avenger is no more"—

reaches the loftiest ideal of expression, and is one of those beautiful and tender thoughts which prove that Handel was not only a great musician, but a great musical poet in the bargain. This chorus—though just as well executed—was not so warmly appreciated as that from Dryden's Ode, to which, nevertheless, while in other respects wholly unlike, it is in every sense equal. *Hercules* (composed in 1744, for the King's Theatre, in the Haymarket) was one of the secular oratorios of Handel, founded on the story of *Dejanira and the Poisoned Garment*, dramatically treated by Sophocles and poetically by Ovid. To the chorus from *Hercules* succeeded the bass air, "Revenge! Timotheus cries," from *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music*, in which, though Dryden, perhaps, excelled his other Ode, Handel (while extinguishing Jeremiah Clarke), can scarcely be said to have beaten his own *St. Cecilia*. The air introduced yesterday, however, is one of the most characteristic in the work, and comprises another of those remarkable passages (where allusion is made to the ghosts of the Grecians, slain in battle) of which Handel has left so many examples, and in which he stands alone among composers. The accompaniments to this air, unusually rough and unsteady throughout, considerably damaged the effect of Signor Belletti's singing, which was artistic and correct, as it seldom fails to be. It thus fell comparatively flat,—notwithstanding the merits both of the composition and the performance.

The "Nightingale" chorus, as it is called—"May no rash intruder"—was the single example from the oratorio of *Solomon*—that prodigy of invention, composed at the age of sixty-three. To sustain the *pianos* in the instrumental symphonies and accompaniments to this chorus was no light task for so enormous a body of players. It was, nevertheless, for the most part, admirably done. The chorus—which, in its continuous and unceasing melodious flow, may be compared with the Address to Music in the *Ode on St. Cecilia*—

a slight defect here and there allowed for (unavoidable, no doubt)—was remarkably well given, the delicious *pianissimo* phrase—

"While nightingales lull them to sleep with their song"—

being sung to perfection—almost breathed, indeed—an extraordinary feat under the circumstances of place and numbers. A loud "encore" ensued, with which, after a moment's pause, Mr. Costa graciously complied. About *Solomon* our musical readers have heard enough; nor do they require to be told anything particular about *Acis and Galatea*—that most eloquent, and chaste of pastorals. From this last, three pieces were introduced—two solo airs and a grand chorus. The first air, "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir"—was allotted to Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, who sang it in a charming unaffected manner, the delicate accompaniments for fiddles (on the higher tones), and the *obbligato* for piccolo (admirably played by M. de Folly), being mellowed and softened by the exceptional space and distance so materially as to realize almost literally the evident idea of imitating the "warbling choir" to which the poet makes reference. This was warmly and deservedly applauded. The second solo was the most heartfelt and beautiful of songs, in which the perfections of "the beloved" are glowingly apostrophized—"Love in her eyes sits playing"—delivered by Mr. Sims Reeves with great intensity of feeling, tempered by a judgment uncompromisingly classical and pure. Every phrase was endowed with its appropriate amount of expression—in no single instance exhibiting that artificial excess which is not feeling, but mere "show" of feeling, and degenerates inevitably into what is fittingly described as "mock sentiment." This was the perfection of singing, and met with the enthusiastic recognition it so justly merited. The chorus from *Acis and Galatea* was that most impressive and marvellously descriptive piece called "Wretched lovers." The measured, "long-drawn" cadence of the lament—the broken ejaculatory phrases, when the giant is first seen, and his "ample strides" strike terror into the beholders—each so graphically depicted in Handel's music, were on the whole well delineated by the choir; this, too, in spite of an occasional "dragging" on the part of the basses, in the florid passage, "Behold the monster Polypheme," and the interference, rather than support, of the dry *staccato* notes delivered by the heavy brass instruments—occasionally as serious an impediment to the singers as the "heavy-armed men" to the rest of the army of Cyrus, described by Xenophon in "The Retreat of the Ten Thousand." A disposition to overlay with "brass" and organ-stops is, indeed, the chief defect in the arrangements at these gigantic music meetings. The grand chorus from *Acis*, however, notwithstanding all shortcomings, was unanimously admired and unanimously applauded. The jolly laughing air with chorus, "Haste thee, nymph" from "L'Allegro," the solos rendered (a tone lower) with spirit and vigor by Mr. Weiss—although there was frequently a want of precision in the general balance of effect, brought the second part of the "selection" to an end amid general and hearty plaudits.

The third part comprised the overture to the oratorio of *Samson*, and air from *Judas Maccabæus*, and several double choruses. The overture was finely played, more especially the quaint and pretty minuet (a foretaste of the dance-music of Gluck), which brought out the fiddles and basses with characteristic effect. The middle movement (fugue) was, on the whole, less satisfactory. The first double chorus was from *Deborah* (Handel's second oratorio to English words, and composed in 1733). "Immortal Lord of earth and skies" belongs to the sublime and lofty style, in which, as a writer for the choir, the composer of *The Messiah* and *Israel* has rarely been approached. One of the themes in this chorus ("Oh, grant a leader to our host") is borrowed from an earlier work—the *Ode on Queen Anne's Birth day* (1713). In magnificence and solemnity the execution of this double chorus was decidedly one of the triumphs of the day. The unison responses from

the various parts of the choir, on the passage "To swift perdition doom our foes," were declaimed with the emphatic precision of one colossal voice; and, indeed, the entire performance was remarkable. The air from *Judas*, "So shall the lute and harp awake"—a universal favorite with sopranos—was allotted to Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, who decidedly excels in the florid style, and in this instance more than sustained her well-earned reputation. The double choruses from *Solomon*—taken from that scene of truly Oriental magnificence in which the King entertains the Queen of Shebah—included "From the censor," which contains a fugue built upon one of the most characteristic subjects ever invented by Handel, and the antiphonal effects in which were rendered with singular precision, point, and accuracy; "Music spread thy voice around"—another exquisite apostrophe to the attractions of the "divine art;" "Now a different measure try"—one of Handel's happiest and most emphatic expressions of martial enthusiasm; "Draw the tear from hopeless love"—a chorus which in depth of pathos has never been surpassed; "Then rolling surges rise"—which so graphically depicts the rise and gradual abatement of the storm; and "Praise the Lord with harp and tongue,"—a hymn to the Deity, in which again we find Handel soaring to the clouds. No praise can be too high for the marvellously correct and effective execution of these choruses—and before all "Draw the tear," the most difficult (on account of the modulations) and the most beautiful of any; nor can Mad. Sainton-Dolby's declamation (as Solomon) of the introductory recitatives to each be eulogized too warmly.

The third part, and the "Selection," came to a worthy conclusion with the air, "Oh, had I Jubal's lyre!" sung with wonderful brilliancy by Mlle. Titiens, and the immortal trio, alternating with semi chorus and full chorus (solo-trio, Mesdames Titiens, Lemmens-Sherrington, and Sainton-Dolby—given to absolute perfection), "See the conquering hero comes"—both from the oratorio of *Joshua*.

(Conclusion, next week.)

The Life of a Composer, an Arabesque.

BY CARL MARIA VON WEBER.

The following eccentric and fanciful sketch, evidently intended as a parody of the author's own adventures and feelings, is translated from "Tonkünstler Leben, eine Arabesque," printed in a collection of Weber's papers, which was published shortly after his decease, for the benefit of his family.]

Away flew the hammer from its joint—and crash went some half dozen strings—with such fury did I dash my hands upon the keys of the pianoforte. In one corner lay the scribbled music-paper, and in another the music-stool; with lengthened strides I paced my little chamber, and zig-zagged in and out of every corner, adroitly avoiding, however, even in the height of my agitation, every sharp angle of the furniture. What for months before had caused me daily annoyance, had, within the last few weeks, risen to its height and grown absolutely insupportable. That indefinite yearning of the heart for something from which we hope for relief, without being able to give ourselves any satisfactory reason why; that painful struggle of the internal powers, which are kept bound in fetters by the consciousness of the unattainable ideal, a bondage from which, at times, there appears no hope of getting free; that irresistible impulse to labor, which raises gigantic images, and after all exhausts itself in mere emptiness of thought; that chaos of fluctuating and anxious feeling, which so often overpowers the whole soul of the artist, had at this moment entirely overwhelmed my own. All the wishes, dreams, and resolutions, connected as well with the heart, as with the general affairs of life, which had frequently before sprung up at shorter intervals, now came upon me with redoubled violence, and drove me absolutely frantic. The burden of existence weighed heavily upon me; fain would I have sought relief from it in the solace of art; but as art exists by life alone, and life by art, they, mutually, combined to destroy both themselves and me. Exhausted, at length, by my internal struggle, I half unconsciously took my customary seat at the pianoforte.

The composer who draws his materials from his instrument, is little else than a child of distress; or, at all events, is on the highway to poverty of spirit and its inseparable companions, vulgarity and com-

monplace. Yes, even these hands, these cursed pianoforte fingers, which by eternal hammering and practising assume, at last, a kind of independency and will of their own—even these become the ignorant tyrants and task-masters of the creative faculties. They invent nothing new; nay, what is worse, they are ever ready to war with whatever is not old. Cunning and roguish, like true handicraftsmen, they patch up, from musty antiquated materials, forms of tone that have almost the look of new figures; and these, as they have something taking in their sound, bribe the ear, which sits as judge in the first instance, and secure a favorable reception. How very differently does he compose, whose inward ear is the judge of what is created, and which, in the very act of its invention, is submitted to the ordeal of criticism. The mental ear has a wonderful tact in receiving the forms of tone, and assigning to them their relative value. Herein lies that divine secret, which is known only to the initiated, and remains incomprehensible to the many.

Such an ear hears whole periods, nay, entire pieces at once. It passes over little occasional lacunæ and irregularities, content to leave them to be filled up in some happier moment; and afterwards, as time and opportunity serve, will review the whole in its parts, and not refuse to abbreviate and retouch, where mature judgment shall point out.

An ear like this delights to see some finished whole; a form of tone with that individuality of features, which, if but once looked at by the eye of a stranger, will be recognized again. This is what it desires, and not a mere *lay figure*, a thing of shreds and patches. If the mind has conceived such an image, it must be content to let it go its time; for good things will have their due season of maturity; it must be fed with proper nourishment, and be reared with care.

At length, an internal voice whispered to me, "Thou must depart—forward, forward! The artist's sphere of action is the world. What avails thee to bury thyself longer in the narrow-minded circle of thy acquaintance? What, the gracious favor of some little Mecenas, extended to thee in payment for some tune reluctantly furnished, to suffer from his stupid and heartless rhymes?—What, the boisterous applause of the multitude on parade, for a successful march? What, even the friendly squeeze of the hand by a pretty neighbor, as the reward of a couple of spirited waltzes? Forward! try thy genius among strangers, and when the exercise of thy talent has given satisfaction to men of judgment—when thou hast advanced their knowledge of thy art, and appropriated to thyself their information,—then return to thy home of peace, and enjoy the fruit of thine industry."

I immediately packed up my instruments, embraced the few individuals whom I counted as friends, requested two or three introductions to families in the next little town, and commenced my journey in the humble stage, which the state of my purse very strongly recommended. It was late in the evening; like dumb shadows my travelling companions sat beside me; not an observation disturbed the deep repose, and I soon settled into a placid sleep, from which I was aroused at early dawn, by the ready hand of the driver, who demanded his fee.

I beheld the unfolding of day in placid grandeur. The holy *crescendo* of nature, displaying itself in a beauteous succession of colors, awakened in my youthful breast a glow of devotional feeling. Filled with serenity and confidence, my inmost soul turned to that power who had infused into my mind a disposition for an art which was to stamp my future life, and which, once implanted, could never again be rooted out. I felt conscious that I was acting up to my vocation, and enjoyed the internal satisfaction of duty fulfilled.

Nature operates on me in a peculiar manner. That quality of the mind, in which all the other faculties concentrate—call it talent, vocation, genius, what you will—restricts within its magic circle all our powers of vision. Not only to our physical, but also to our mental eye, is its particular horizon assigned. Both may be varied by change of position; and well is it for the artist, if, in his progress forward, he can enlarge it; for to go out of it is impossible. Nay more—all objects assume the peculiar coloring of the artist's mind, and imperceptibly partake of the characteristic tone of his life and sensations. At least, I acknowledge that such is the fact in my case: with me, everything is associated with musical forms, and becomes modified accordingly. The contemplation of a landscape is to me like the performance of a piece of music. I feel the effect of the whole upon my mind, without analyzing, or dwelling upon, the individual parts of it. In a word, strange as it may seem, the landscape has upon me the effect of a rhythmical movement; it is to me a successive enjoy-

ment. But it is equally a source of delight and of pain; of delight, when I calmly contemplate the manner in which interesting objects are harmoniously blended together; and of pain, when I see these objects mingled and confused, as they are beheld from the window of a stage coach. A corresponding confusion is communicated to my mind; all my associations become wild and disorderly. Good heaven! perhaps at the very moment I am beating out a confusedly complicated fugue, a rondo theme will start up, which in its turn is supplanted by a pastorate, and that again by a furioso, or a funeral march. By my fellow passengers, ignorant of the peculiar workings of my mind, and deterred from conversation by my strange and unsocial demeanor, I am, of course, set down as one of the stupidest fellows in existence!

Meanwhile, we had reached the pleasant little town of X—, and so powerfully did I feel the mania of essaying my musical powers, that, contrary to my first intention, I resolved on sojourning there for a time, in order to gratify it. "None but a faint-hearted simpleton," said I to myself, "suffers himself to be dejected." So humming Pedrillo's air in *Die Entführung* (Mozart's *Seraglio*), I sought the refreshment of my couch, full of buoyant hopes respecting my projected concert.

On the following morning, I made the best figure I could, and waited on Mr. Von Y—, of the musical taste of whose family I had heard a great deal, and who was one of the most influential personages in that small town.

He saluted me with, "Ah, welcome! I am extremely happy to make your acquaintance; I assure you, in several letters I have received, your name has been very favorably mentioned." (I bowed.)—You, of course, know my newest sonatas?"

I was strangely embarrassed. "I beg pardon, but really I cannot say that."

"But," interrupted he, "the quartet!"

"I am very sorry," said I, stammering and blushing at the time; "but I do not remember."

"Well," said my host, not a little disconcerted, "at all events, you must be familiar with my set of capriccios—at least, if you read the journals, or are at all conversant with scientific literature."

I felt that these perplexing questions must be put a stop to, and so plunged at once into the desperate confession. "I am ashamed of my ignorance; but was really unaware of the fact, that Herr Von Y— composed."

The good gentleman's countenance fell; and lowering instantly the tone of his voice, he said, "My dear friend, I am really very sorry, but understanding that you propose giving concerts, I must candidly tell you that you have very little chance, very little indeed, of doing any good here. The people of this place, Sir, are critical judges; critical as the Viennese themselves, and (here a new thought seemed to strike him)—unless indeed, you could prevail on my daughter to sing—in that case—"

At this moment the door of the room opened, and a young female entered, whose figure and appearance were of a kind to provoke observation, not unmingled with mirth. She was her father's Opera *prima*, and a truly droll specimen of composition did she exhibit. Do but picture to yourself a diminutive creature, burdened with a tremendously large head, covered with black shaggy hair, and ornamented with a tiara of false diamonds of unconscionable size. From her mouth, at the formation of which the Graces did not certainly preside, issued a voice which resembled a pitch-pipe of the days of good Guido Arettinus, and screeched such tones, that my ears enjoyed sensations similar to those produced by scratching on a pane of glass. The delicate daughter threw her spider-like arms around her papa, who introduced her to me as a scholar of the art, and said, "You must sing this gentleman a part of your grand scena; you know how much I admire it. Sir, it is a composition at once lofty and profound." (I bowed.)

The young cantatrice eyed me from top to toe, with that kind of patronizing air which your long-pursued amateur knows so well how to affect, and then, turning, said to her father, "Papa, you know (and here she strove to get up a cough,) you know what a cold I have got; I am absolutely hoarse to-day; (here she began a strained croaking;) good heavens! you yourself hear in what bad order my voice is."

The fact is, that nature had denied the lady organs capable of producing any thing like an endurable tone; and when she began again to essay, I felt alarmed. I, however, suppressed my repugnance, and feeling that interest prompted my doing the polite thing, I interposed, and begged that the lady would honor me by singing a few measures.

The condescending maiden (evidently nothing

loth) complied. She squatted down before the pianoforte, and after hammering out a few chords with all her might, and blundering an unfortunate slipshod run through the semi-tones, she screamed a bravura air of Scarlatti.

I showed all the interest I could feign, striving occasionally to get a peep at the notes, over her active and broad-spread shoulders. At every dozen measures she would exclaim with a languishing turn of the head, "You see, I cannot make it out at all!" She then coughed again, and offered little *appoggiatura* remarks upon her hoarseness, and amidst increasing interruptions, at last got to the end of her task. I struggled against nature to say something handsome of the performance, for my very teeth were set on edge; some of her upper notes were for all the world like those of the hurdy-gurdy. Nothing could be more dangerous than admiration at such a moment; for I saw she was on the point of treating me to another specimen, when luckily her mother entered. This lady was a perfect copy of Xantippe, in a high state of preservation. The moment she came in she set up a shout of admiration, compared to which, the noise of one of Wranitzky's allegros is but as the rustling of a few leaves. I thought it but common politeness to contribute my quota of admiration at the same time; but my feeble "bravo!" died away unheard amidst the tempest of her applause.

"My daughter, Sir," said she at last, after she had somewhat recovered from her raptures, "is a true musical genius; the talent she possesses is astonishing! and though she did not begin to study music till thirteen, she has frequently corrected the *Stadt-musikant* (musician in ordinary to the town) in general bass. And then, Sir, you should hear how beautifully she plays on the *Stadtharmonica*. O, go and fetch it; there is nothing to compare with that charming instrument!"

The agonies of death seized me, in anticipation of this new ordeal, and I could only stammer out, that it certainly was an instrument adapted to Adagios.

"True," said the pertinacious mamma, "Adagios, that is the very thing; so, my dear, pray play us Mozart's *Bird-catcher*."

I could contain myself no longer; disgust gave way to an inclination to laugh, and in spite of all my struggles, the suppressed titter at length broke forth. The countenances of the whole family underwent an instantaneous change; and, from a smirk of self-complacency, fell some dozen inches in length. They whispered to each other: my ear caught the words, "Utterly destitute of all taste!"—"No more ear for true music than an ape!"—and in the course of five minutes, I found myself left quite alone.—The father was called away upon business, the mother was wanted in the kitchen, and the Signora figlia, complaining of head-ache, scampered away to her boudoir. I drew breath as though my lungs were obliged to supply the bellows of the great organ at Westminster; and, after a moment's pause, laying my finger on my nose, I performed the *scala descendendo*, and walked quietly out of the house, fully resolved never again to attempt to propitiate the patronage of a musical family.

I determined to go directly to the *Stadt-musikus*, to engage the necessary performers for my concert.

I had not proceeded far in the street, when I met a group of choras-singers, who were preparing to treat the townspeople to a piece of music. They were coughing themselves right lustily into good voice.

Oh divine human organ! thou first instrument bestowed upon us by the Creator, according to which all others are modelled; thou that alone art capable of truly and effectively moving the feelings; how admirably do thy powers appear to me in a choral song, which, even when exercised in an humble degree, put me quite in a glow, and strike to my very heart!

Though full of my project, I halted, prepared to listen to a chorus, simple, touching, and in every respect adapted to the feelings and capacity of the people. But my evil stars had doomed me to-day to nothing but vexation and annoyance; and what should my gentlemen strike up but one of the latest airs from the opera of *Fanelon*; and even this they so dreadfully mangled, keeping neither time nor tune that I made no scruple of accosting the lanky singer of the bass, who stood next to me, and who, as he was filling up his pause in the piece by voraciously swallowing a jorum of bread and milk, appeared the least likely to suffer any interruption, inquiring of him the direction of Mr.—, the *Stadt-musikus*, "Sir, Herr Herr *Principal* lives yonder to the right; you cannot possibly miss the house; you will be sure to hear them, for this is the very hour they are practising the Russian horn-music; but I don't think you'll find any vacancy at present."

39

The peo - ple that walk-ed, that walk - ed in dark-ness, that walk - ed in dark-

ness, The peo - ple that walk-ed in dark - - - - - ness, have

seen a great light, have seen a great light,..... a great light,..... have

seen a great light; And they that dwell, that

dwell in the land of the sha - - - - - dow of death..... And

they that dwell, that dwell in the land, that dwell in the land of the shadow of death....

up - on them hath the light shin - ed, And

they that dwell, that dwell in the land of the sha - - - - - dow of death, up -

- on them hath the light shin - - - - - ed, up - on them hath the light

shin - ed.

No. 12. FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN.

Isaiah ix. v. 6.

CHORUS. ANDANTE ALLEGRO.

SOPRANO.

ALTO.
(or 2nd Treble).

TENORE.

BASSO.

ANDANTE
ALLEGRO.

♩ = 138.

Sva.

The musical score is written for four vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked 'CHORUS. ANDANTE ALLEGRO.' and the meter is indicated as '♩ = 138.' The piano part begins with a forte (mf) dynamic. The lyrics are distributed across the vocal staves as follows:

For un-to us a child is born, un-to us a son is
 given, un-to us a son is given, For un-to us a child is born,.....
 For unto us a child is born, un-to

42

15

For un-to

us a son is given, un-to us a son is given,

us a child is born, un-to us a son is given, un-to

For un-to us a child is born,.....

us a son is given, un-to us a son is given,

and the government shall

un-to us a son is given,

Not a little chagrined at the fellow's coolness, I answered rather testily, that I was in want of no such situation, and turning sharply on my heel, I steered my course directly towards the house. Sure enough I had no difficulty in finding it; for of all the horrid noises I had ever heard, this was the most appalling. Feeling considerable alarm for the drums of my ears I cautiously approached the scene of uproar, and at length making a bold effort, entered the school. The scene that presented itself was whimsical in the extreme. In a circle of from ten to fifteen boys, who were blowing their horns with all their might, or at least stood in the act of blowing, was stationed the *Stadt-musikus*, who grasped in both hands a baton of formidable size, with which he beat the time upon a pianoforte that stood near him, and occasionally upon the head of the unlucky wight who happened to miss the time; and all this had the additional accompaniment of his feet, with which he stamped with the fury of one who had lately escaped from the mad-house. They were performing an overture of his own composition, in which the horns had a very predominant part, and which his scholars were playing after the Russian fashion—a horn to every single note. To the right and left were ranged other performers on the violin, clarinet, bassoon, trombone, &c., who were working away with all their might, giving every passage *fortissimo*; and in the midst of this terrible din was, at every instant, heard the infuriated exclamation of the director: "Wrong, you blundering dog! too high! too low! too quick! too slow! attention there!" &c.

My entrance did not mend matters; there was something more novel in the appearance of a stranger than in their master's score, and every eye was turned toward me, to the good director's no small annoyance. The moment was critical; they had just come to the *allegro*, and the master wishing to rally the attention of his scholars, and bring his favorite passage to bear, waxed warm in the fervor of direction, and beat and stamped with redoubled fury. At this unlucky moment, a long board, which served as a music-shelf, having become loosened by such powerful and incessant vibration, came down with a crash upon the pianoforte, and sent the sounding board in shivers into the air. A burst of laughter, *all'unisono*, followed, and there was an end of every thing like music, at least for this sitting. Profiting by this moment, I stepped forward, and introduced myself to the worthy director.

(To be continued.)

The Charity Children at St. Paul's.

The anniversary meeting of the Charity Children at St. Paul's took place on Thursday, the 12th of June, under the dome of the church, when, as usual, full cathedral service was performed, with anthems and the ordinary musical accompaniments.

The prayers were intoned by the Rev. Mr. Simpson, and the lessons read by the Rev. Mr. J. V. Povah—both minor canons. The choir included, as from time immemorial, not only the singers exclusively attached to St. Paul's, but emissaries from St. George's Chapel (Windsor), the Chapel Royal, the Temple, Westminster Abbey, &c.—about eighty in all. Mr. H. Buckland (vicar-choral)—upon whom, and Mr. George Cooper, organist of St. Sepulchre's and sub-organist of St. Paul's, devolves the very important charge of training and practising the young singers for the important ceremony, at which they are annually expected to assist—beat time, from an elevated pulpit, so conveniently placed as to be within sight of the great majority. At the organ (the superb new instrument recently purchased by the Dean and Chapter—an invaluable adjunct) were Mr. Goss, chief organist, under whose superintendence the whole of the musical part of the festival is prepared, and Mr. George Cooper; while near the organ were stationed the four trumpets (Messrs. T. Harper, Irwin, Jones, and Macfarlane) and the drums (Mr. Chipp)—the "orchestra" so indispensable in maintaining the equilibrium and adding to the sonority of the performance. The musical "programme" was almost precisely the same as in former years. Of course the "Pieces" and "Responses" were those of Tallis, who, though writing as early as the reign of Elizabeth, and little known through his other works, seems to have accomplished something in this instance which, by universal consent, is regarded as inseparable from the cathedral service of the Church of England. Before prayers the 100th Psalm—"All people that on earth do dwell"—set to the most simple and at the same time most impressive of hymn tunes, with which Haydn, for whom the music of M. Berlioz would not have been music at all, and M. Berlioz (more than half a century later), to whom the music of Haydn was never over and above congenial, were equally enchanted—was sung by the

children; and in saying that the "unison" of their "thousands" of fresh voices, employed upon so familiar a strain, in a great measure realized the ideal of sublimity, we are only echoing the opinions of some of the greatest musicians and musical judges. The Chant was that of Dr. Crotch (in C), a pleasing, but in some sense trivial melody, which barely retains its freshness after the many repetitions which the necessities of the service entail. Although, perhaps, more than 1,000 chants are to be had for the asking, it is not less true that scarcely one exists (or, at least, is in general use) that can be cited as worthy.

The "Te Deum" and "Jubilate" were sung as usual to "Dr. Boyce in A," which, unaffected and graceful as, in some respects, it undoubtedly is, should long before have given place to something—we do not say more erudite, but *better*. Surely there are musicians among us capable of setting these essential portions of our service to strains more eloquent and inspiring. It is only the other day that, at the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy, in this very same cathedral, we had to mention, in terms of unqualified praise, a new anthem, by Mr. Goss, written for the occasion. Now, as Mr. Goss is organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, it is hardly too much to exact from his pen—if not every year, at all events now and then—a new anthem, in which the voices of the charity children might be judiciously combined with those of the choir. Here is an opportunity of which Mendelssohn would have availed himself with eagerness—an opportunity for effects, however simple, both novel and impressive. Mr. Goss is a master, as all the musical world is aware. He is also (as his printed works have shown) a composer of genius. Why, then, when his duties so exclusively connect him with St. Paul's Cathedral, should not his talents be devoted to such a work? Dr. Boyce is very well in his way; more than respectable, indeed; but we are much mistaken if Mr. Goss could not produce an anthem to console all lovers of sacred music for at least the temporary secession of his time-honored predecessor, whose "Te Deum" and "Jubilate," composed for the coronation of George III., have lost much of their freshness by a century's wear and tear. One of the grandest performances on this occasion—and, indeed, one of the grandest we ever heard—was that of Handel's superb anthem, "Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, anointed Solomon King"—composed in 1727, for the coronation of George II. Never in our experience have the children (the choir was necessarily perfect) sung so well as in this truly magnificent piece. The unison for boys' voices on the words, "May the King live for ever," and other points that we have no space to particularize, produced a thrilling sensation, and made us more than ever long for some composition from a modern pen—native or foreign, M. Meyerbeer or Mr. Goss—in which such elements of legitimate musical effect could be expressly, instead of (as in the case of Handel's anthem) accidentally, employed. The whole performance (accompanied by Messrs. Goss and Cooper on the organ) was splendid. Precision and delicacy went hand in hand. The words, the music, the place, and the occasion, all combined in creating an impression that under any other circumstances would be impossible. No praise can be too high for Messrs. Buckland (leader of the choir at the special Sunday evening services) and George Cooper, who in the interval between the present festival and the last have trained the children to such good purpose.

Immediately before the sermon we had the 113th Psalm ("Ye saints and servants of the Lord") to the fine old tune of Ganthany (1774)—which would, we think, lose nothing by the omission of the chorus. "Hallelujah," added by some unknown hand, and quite out of sorts with the rest. The contrast between the "tutti"—where the trumpets aid in giving extra force and sonority to the choral unison—and the passages allotted to the voices of the girls alone ("His rising beams or setting rays")—"Who made the Heaven wherein He dwells," &c.) lends a peculiar attraction to this tune, which, old as it is, seems to be endowed with perennial freshness. Still nobler is the setting by Dr. Croft (1702) of the 104th Psalm, which followed the sermon. This was even more admirably given by the children, whose "high E" on the word "fame" ("So passing in glory, so great in Thy fame") was as clear as a bell, and as resonant as a trumpet. In the "Hallelujah"—the immortal "Hallelujah" from the *Messiah*—with which the service always terminates, and with which it is likely to terminate a century hence, supposing the festival endures as long—the juvenile host of singers reached their culminating point of excellence, in some of the unison passages (as, for example, "For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," not only rivaling, but excelling, the precision with which, in the earlier service, they gave the "Gloria Patri" of old

Tallis, after the reading Psalms. Of course, the chorus was taken slower than it would be at Exeter Hall, but the impression created was, under the circumstances of place and execution, all the more solemn. So well have the children been drilled by their teachers since last festival, that they not only sang more than twice as much of the chorus as on any former occasion, but the organists, Messrs. Goss and Cooper, were enabled to play the whole of the accompaniments, arranged from Handel's score. A point worth mentioning is the manner in which the exquisitely beautiful phrase, "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord," was breathed rather than declaimed. Finest of all, however, was the astonishing passage of ascent, on the words, "King of Kings," &c.—from D up to F, with the long sustained notes at each step in the progression. The effect of the multitudinous unison in this instance beggars description. But enough has been said of the children. A strong word of praise is due to the united choirs for their faultless execution of everything assigned to them in the musical service. It would be no compliment to such practised musicians to say that they had improved, but certainly we never heard them sing better. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Durham, who took for his text, chapter 7, verse 12, of Ecclesiastes—"For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence," &c.—*London Musical World*.

Church Music in New York.

(From the Sunday Mercury.)

(Continued.)

STS. PETER AND PAUL'S CHURCH, WILLIAMSBURG.

St. Peter and Paul's is preeminently superior to any choir we have yet heard, excepting St. Peter's in New York—and even that splendid choir, in some respects, cannot compete with the one above-mentioned. The Williamsburg church-choir is composed of the following ladies and gentlemen; Mr. Charles W. Melville, organist; Mrs. George H. Fisher, soprano; Miss Mary Gallagher, alto; Mr. Charles G. Lockwood, tenor; and Mr. Frank Melville, baritone. The accomplished and gentlemanly organist, Melville, Sr., is professionally well known in this city and Brooklyn for the past twenty years. During that period of time, he has been engaged in our leading churches, and has always exulted in the reputation of being a most successful leader and an accomplished instructor. Many of our most popular musicians, vocal and instrumental, have graduated under his tuition. We recollect his son, Frank, when he was a musical prodigy, engaged at the age of ten years in the Church of the Nativity, in Second Avenue, of this city, where he displayed unmistakable evidences of his present musical talent and vocal excellence. He is one of the most admirable vocalists we have heard in a church for many a long day. He has a rich, full, mellifluous, and well-cultivated baritone voice, possesses entire control over it, and sings with so much ease, gracefulness, and expression as to render it truly delightful. He possesses, besides, the splendid method of the Italian school, and would be an acquisition to any musical organization, of which it might justly be proud.

Mrs. Fisher is a very pleasing, if not a powerful soprano. She sings with much expression and feeling and is such a fine musician, that she uses her voice to greater advantage than sopranos of more compass and power. It appears to us, however, that if this lady were less impulsive, and exercised less abandon in her vocalization, she would tell with better effect in a large church. Miss Mary Gallagher possesses one of the richest alto or mezzo-soprano voices we have ever heard. This lady is well known in musical circles; but her voice and method of execution seems to improve every day. Her entire being seems to become enrap in the burthen of the theme she interprets, and she rises and falls in a burst of musical eloquence positively charming. Mr. Charles Lockwood, the young and powerful tenor of this choir, is a finished musician, and a faultless vocalist. We noticed this gentleman last week in connection with St. James' Church. He has for some time been permanently attached to Sts. Peter and Paul's, and to that he has devoted his finest efforts. His appearance at St. James' in the afternoon vespers has been the result of a brief engagement with that choir, but the duty of singing through three different services in one day becoming too arduous, he has resigned this position, and intends in future to devote all his attention to his own church. He is certainly a valuable acquisition to any choir, for he possesses one of those robust, soul-stirring, and sonorous voices which are seldom heard in the rendition of sacred melody.

The services of last Sunday morning commenced with Generali's Mass in C, consisting of the "Kyrie," "Gloria," and "Credo." All Italian masses conclude with the "Credo," and other compositions have to be taken up to complete the services. This is a very difficult composition, and Generali is always a terror to any but accomplished vocalists. The "Kyrie" begins with a duet for soprano and alto, followed with a duet for tenor and alto, and finishing with a concerted movement. The "Gloria" begins with solo for alto, "Crucifixus," etc., and is finished with a grand tutti movement. It were almost futile to attempt a description of the intricacy and vocal beauty of those grand solos and choruses. Suffice it to say, that they were sustained with an artistic ability and an accuracy of time which we have never seen excelled. Then came the "Credo," the master effort of the mass. The alto begins with the solo "Qui tollis." This splendid solo called into requisition all the resources of Miss Gallagher's voice, and handsomely did she acquit herself. This beautiful effort is followed with a duet for tenor and bass, in the execution of which those admirable vocalists displayed so much ability and skill as to entitle them to all praise. Then a quartet movement follows, to the "Resurrexit," etc., during which tenor and soprano take up the melody at intervals, magnificently executed, and soprano and alto sustain a duet. This duet was faultlessly rendered, both vocalists evincing an accurate conception of the composer's sublime idea—after which, a fortissimo movement ensues, and the final "Amen" vibrates through the edifice with thrilling effect. During the "Credo," the bass and tenor sing a duet, "Gratias Agimus," and the alto has a solo, "Quoniam tu Solus Sanctus," both of which were beautifully executed.

At the offertory, Mr. Melville sang an exquisite solo, "Me In Felix," by Rossi. In this beautiful melody, the excellent baritone exceeded all his previous efforts, and excited our highest admiration.

Generali being removed from the stand, Carl Von Weber was taken up, and the "Sanctus," "Benedictus," and "Agnus Dei," from one of his splendid masses, closed the morning services. From the beginning to the end of the "Sanctus," it was difficult to discern the grandest effort of composer or vocalist. It is such an intricate composition, and so difficult of execution, that we really believe it would be impossible to induce many choirs to attempt it. It abounds in solos, duets, and tutti movements, which requires the nicest harmony and strictest accuracy of time to perform. Notwithstanding all this, it was apparently an easy task with those celebrated choristers. For while the "Hosannah" followed the "Benedictus" in such rapid succession that there was scarcely time allowed to breathe, there was not a single rest or bar lost until the "Sanctus" was grandly and superbly finished.

The "Agnus Dei" followed, and was sung in the same fine style—as were the other parts. To Miss Gallagher was allotted the charming solo of the "Agnus Dei," which she rendered with her wonted expression and feeling. After this came, *en fortissimo*, the "Donna Nobis Pacem," and the services closed in a hurricane of choral grandeur. Taken altogether, the exercises of that morning are deserving of the most unqualified praise, and reflect great credit upon the distinguished organist and his invaluable assistants.

Vespers, or evening services, commence in this church at 7, P.M. Long before the vocalists make their appearance in the choir, the galleries are almost filled with persons of all religious denominations, attracted thither by the elaborate and beautiful musical display which they are in the habit of presenting on these occasions. The music given upon the evening in question consisted of Blanchi's Vespers, with selections from other renowned composers. The "Dominum Adjuvandum," and "Dixit Dominus" being chanted in unison. The "Laudate Pueri" commences with a tenor solo, which was cleverly done; then follow solos for alto, soprano, and basso. All those sweet morceaux were finely executed. But the gem of the vespers, and indeed, the master-piece of the entire music of the day, was reserved for the soprano and alto. "Quis Est Homo," by Rossini, was the selection. Who has listened to this immortal composer's "Stabat Mater" and will deny that he is one of the most exquisite creators of sacred lyrics that has ever adorned the world. The simplest inspiration of the great maestro bears the impress of a godlike genius. The "Quis est Homo," sang by Mrs. Fisher and Miss Gallagher, on last Sunday night, was, to our mind, the most exquisite and original piece of sacred music we have ever heard anywhere. It would appear that it was written expressly for those charming vocalists; for the expression and tenderness with which they rendered it riveted the attention of the entire congregation; and, to judge

from the expression of their countenances, they were more inclined to burst forth in vociferous applause than to remain quiet in their pews. It was a glorious effort; and we are inclined to doubt if there are two other voices in the cities of New York or Brooklyn, who can approach them in the execution of this unapproachable duet. After this, we had a grand "Magnificat" by Blanchi—during the progression of which several solos occur, and closes with a tutti movement. Then followed a trio, "Salva Regina," for soprano, alto, and basso, by Mandinichi—and a delightful vocal effort it was. Now came an auspicious moment for the tenor and bass voices. They take from the voluminous libretto a "Tantum Ergo," by Blanchi, for two voices, and the organist begins the symphony. Here was a treat. Both voices were as clear and musical as a silver bell, and they sang that beautiful duet with so much feeling as to surpass all their previous efforts. Messrs. Lockwood and Melville were in still better voice than in the morning, and we have never heard them sing with more exquisite harmony, or with finer effect.

As a grand finale, they sang a "Laudate Pueri" by Adam. This commenced with a duet for soprano and alto, bringing full chorus into requisition, and concluding with a splendid display of vocal power—the tenor ascending as high as B natural above the staff, and sending his powerful chest-voice ringing through the church like a trumpet. The performances of the morning and evening was a perfect musical carnival. The superiority of this choir is, perhaps, owing in a great measure to the fidelity and friendship which exists between its members.

[The Mercury is still up to fever heat. Surely the dog-star rages as often as our friend sets out upon his weekly tour of universal admiration through the Catholic church choirs. What must the church music be, which can create for itself such an unspeakable admirer!]

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JULY 19, 1862.

MUSIC IN THIS NUMBER.—Continuation of Handel's Messiah.

Musical Instruments in the International Exhibition.

Mons. FÉTIS, père, has commenced a series of letters to the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* of Paris, of which he formerly was editor, embodying the results of his observations upon the musical instruments at the Great Exhibition in London. M. FÉTIS represented Belgium in the Jury, from various nations, who were to examine and award prizes in this department. We have looked thus far in vain for any authentic report upon the subject; mere detached rumors of acknowledged superiorities, of prizes, &c., mostly in the interest of this or that piano-forte maker, are all that have found their way into the newspapers, or even into the musical journals thus far which have come under our observation. So experienced, industrious and vigilant an observer as the elder FÉTIS—a musical *savant*, with the whole history of music and the whole museum of its apparatus in his head—must, it would seem, have something interesting and instructive to communicate about what he has been so carefully examining. The more so, that he writes in a familiar free and easy way, making his own comments on the jury as well as on the instruments submitted to their judgment. The letters are none the less interesting for the good-natured, egotistic old man's gossip, which runs through them.

We propose to translate some passages, hoping in course of time to get at the facts, although in the two letters thus far received, he only hints at the conclusions of the Jury. He begins naturally with the Piano-fortes. One thing cannot fail to strike the reader strangely; that, while he speaks of Broadwood, Pleyel, Herz, and other

famous makers, he does not even mention Erard. Can it be that the maker *par excellence*, in the world's opinion hitherto, disdained to enter into competition in such a mammoth advertising market, as some have pronounced the Exhibition to be, where makers have employed virtuosos like Thalberg, Jaell, (we have even heard Liszt named, but must doubt it without further evidence), to show off the qualities of their instruments to the admiring crowd so many hours each day!—And by a striking coincidence, our own American Erards, the house of Chickering, were not represented. The thought at least suggests itself, that possibly the names are coupled in an honorable distinction.

We translate from the first letter, dated London, June 7, 1862. After some general introduction, M. FÉTIS writes:

"First of all, I should like to ask if you have not been greatly astonished to see me here, charged with a considerable labor, while other important labors claimed my presence elsewhere (his professorship at the musical Conservatoire in Brussels). For myself, I could scarcely credit what I have just been doing, if I had not been obliged to get up every morning at 5 o'clock, in order to be at the place of exhibition at half past six, after travelling a distance of four miles.—When it was first proposed to me to accept a place on the jury for musical matters, I refused, believing that I had largely paid my debt to my country at the *Exposition Universelle* of 1855, for which I made the journey from Brussels to Paris and back twenty-two times, besides the labor, which occupied me more than a year, as sole reporter of the class of instruments of music. I also pleaded this time of the year, which is that of the examinations of the Conservatoire confided to my direction, and the approaching *Concours*, and then too the proof-sheets of my *Biographie Universelle des Musiciens*, the correction of which occupies me six hours every day. To all this they made but one reply: *We have need of you*. If I spoke of my age, they began to laugh. In fine, high influences acted against my first resolution, and I found myself anew in a labyrinth of interests of all sorts. Thank God, I am out of it.

"On my arrival in London, and after reading over the rules established by the superior commission of the Exhibition, I perceived that juries of every class would be seriously embarrassed by the 14th article of these rules: *There is but one kind of medal, which is to be awarded to merit, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF DEGREE OR NATIONALITY AND WITHOUT COMPARISON BETWEEN PRODUCERS*. I confess I was astonished, that, under such conditions, great houses, known by the superiority of their products, could have been willing to send them to the International Exhibition; but they were not informed, they thought they came here on the same terms as at Paris in 1855. They did not know that, instead of a generous government taking upon itself to bear all the pecuniary losses inevitable in such industrial and commercial solemnities, they would here find themselves in the presence of speculators, whose sole end is the harvest of shillings levied at the door; for the English government never intervenes in things of this kind; it leaves it all to private interest. . . . This accounts for the great houses being represented. As to producers of a lower order, however estimable in many points of view, they alone would be the gainers, since a medal decreed to them would, by

the mere fact, elevate them to the rank of those in whose wake they have marched behind until to-day."

M. Fétis called the attention of his colleagues to this injustice; he told them that it is not with musical instruments as it is with cotton or woollen goods, where the coarsest fabric may be just as good for its purpose as the finest, and where cheapness is one of the points of excellence; but here the sentiment of Art must be taken into the account; "in the musical instrument, the end of which is the manifestation of all the inspirations of the artist, there are degrees, the last term of which is perfection." He pleaded in vain; the majority of the committee were opposed to any modification of the rule.

"Nevertheless I felt an invincible repugnance to the prescriptions of article 14. After the first days passed in examining Pianos, in the opinion of all the members of the jury and even of some of the exhibitors, the instruments of Messrs. Broadwood, Henri Herz, and Pleyel, Wolff & Co., were declared the kings of this category. Immediately after them came other makers, whose products were distinguished, either by a powerful sonority, or by a brilliant and sympathetic timbre, or in fine by a simple and easy system of mechanism, as well as by the other qualities of a good construction. It then occurred to me to propose a measure, which I thought the best to satisfy all interests: it consisted in putting out of the competition those makers who presented exceptional qualities in all kinds of instruments of one species, so as to reserve the medal for those who come immediately after, and in awarding an honorable mention to products of the third degree, setting aside all that fell below that. This project found support in the opinion of several of my honorable colleagues, viz. M. Lissajous (France), Herr Pauer (Austria), Schiedmeyer (Wurtemberg), and Sir. Gores Ouseley, all distinguished in science and art. A proposition to this effect was drawn up, signed by us five, and presented to our other colleagues.

"The undersigned members of the 16th Jury, &c., &c., have recognized:

"1. That different categories present themselves among the exhibitors, in that there are some who manufacture all kinds of pianos, grand and small, while others limit themselves to one or two kinds only.

"2. That there are some among them who, obliged to submit in their country to the conditions of cheap sale, cannot lay out upon their instruments the expense necessary to attain perfection, but who, under these conditions, arrive at results relatively satisfactory.

"3. And finally that a small number of exhibitors, by the important capital at their disposal, by the exceptional qualities of the material put into their work, by a long experience, by multiplied attempts and by an incessant trial after the best possible, have succeeded in giving to their instruments, not only an unalterable solidity, not only brilliant resonance, not only regular action of the mechanism, but the distinction of timbre, the equality throughout the whole compass of the key-board, and the sensibility of touch which answers to all the nuances of expression.

"The undersigned have therefore the honor to propose to their honorable colleagues the adoption of the following resolution: *The exhibitors of the third category, makers of all kinds of pianos, comprised under numbers, etc., are excluded from the competition.*

"By this separation of the products of great houses, whose commercial prosperity is independent of the obtaining of a medal, it will be possible to award this recompense to products, which, without attaining to the same degree of excellence, yet have distinguished qualities worthy of much esteem or answering the general want of pianos for study and for daily use, the price of which is within the reach of the largest number of consumers; whereas, if the medal were awarded only to the exceptional instruments of artists and of concertists, the exclusion of those whose use is universal would be a serious damage to the existence of a certain number of makers, whose products have an incontestable merit."

M. Fétis's plan, which he extended to all instruments, as well as to pianos, was overruled in the council of managers. So he proposed another, which he had the pleasure of seeing warmly accepted. "The measure consisted in determining the value of the medal by a declara-

tion of the motive of the award, inscribed on the *proceed-verbal* and in the report. . . . Thus there will be no doubt about the value of the medals awarded, when, coupled with the mention of those of Messrs. Broadwood, Henri Herz, and Pleyel, Wolff & Co., you read: *For perfection in all kinds of Pianos, and in all respects of sonority, equality, precision of mechanism in the shades of expression and solidity; when, on the medal awarded to Messrs. Steinway & Son, of New York, you see these words: For the clear, brilliant and sympathetic sonority of a square piano of large dimension and of a grand piano; and so on.*

In his next letter M. Fétis commences his series of observations on the musical instruments of all kinds in the Exhibition.

PROMENADE CONCERTS.—The first of these popular entertainments, got up really on a generous scale by the ORCHESTRAL UNION, did not draw as many people to the Music Hall last Saturday evening, as we had hoped to see. And those who came seemed not much in the mood of promenading, but preferred to sit still in the galleries, leaving the bare floor of the hall unpeopled. The galleries, however, were well filled, as also the outskirts of the floor. Doubtless the want of a larger audience was accidental, and partly owing to the sober mood of the community in these times of trial. The music, of its kind, was excellent. The orchestra was as complete as in the winter afternoon concerts, with plentiful addition of brass and other martial instruments, suited to the brilliant character of the selections.

The *Fra Diavolo* overture was admirably played, the three trumpets being very effective in the solo. The "Turkish March" from a piano sonata by Mozart, arranged for orchestra by Mr. RYAN, sounded quite Oriental, and pleased so much that it had to be repeated. There was a good concert waltz by Strauss, and a Grand Overture by Lindpaintner, on "God save the King," introducing a descriptive battle scene, which was exceedingly noisy, grandiose and brilliant, and quite a victory over difficulties on the part of the orchestra. The military reed band portion of the members played a scene from *Traviata* finely.

Certainly the concert came as near to the Jullien and the Alfred Mellon promenade concerts in London, as Boston means and habits would permit. The band was large (for us), well trained, and played with great spirit and precision under ZERBAH's energetic lead. But the people would not promenade. This being the case, we wonder why a programme in part classical would not be quite as popular now, as in the Afternoon Concerts of last season. At all events we venture the suggestion that this programme was too uniformly brilliant; it needed the relief of something gentler, sweeter, more addressed to quiet moods.

Music Abroad.

London.

THE OPERAS.—At Her Majesty's Theatre the pieces performed, during the last half of June, were: *Robert le Diable*, given five times in succession, with Titjens almost reviving the charm of Jenny Lind in the part of Alice, Carlotta Marchisio as Isabella, Sig. Vialetti (engaged by Maretzek for next season) as Bertram, Bettini as Rimbauld, and Armandi as Robert; then *Il Trovatore*, with Titjens, Trebelli, the beautiful contralto, Sig. Giuglini, Gassier and Santley; then *Robert* again, for the sixth time. Miss Louisa Pyne was engaged, and was to make her first appearance as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*.

The Royal Italian Opera was also chiefly occupied with Meyerbeer, alternating occasionally with his—not cousin German, but cousin Italian, Verdi. Thus on Saturday, June 14, the *Huguenots* was repeated. On Monday *Don Giovanni*, which, happily, is always in demand, with Patti for Zerlina. On Tuesday, Mlle. Marie Battu made her debut as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, with Mme. Nantier Didiée, Sig. Mario, Delle Sedie and Tagliascio in the other rôles. Mlle. Battu is a very young singer, not yet twenty, enjoying a certain reputation in Paris, where she made her debut a year ago at the Théâtre Italien. The *Musical World* says of her:

One of the pupils of the celebrated Duprez, Mlle. Battu has never studied in the Conservatoire, nor, if we are rightly informed, has she at any time sung in French opera. Under these circumstances, she claims the indulgent criticism to which every new aspirant is entitled, and which should on no account be withheld from timid experience. This indulgence may be extended with the less chariness inasmuch as Mlle. Battu, in addition to youth and a pleasing exterior, possesses the germs of unquestionable talent, and exhibits, moreover, a degree of promise which at her years is well worth nurturing. Her voice, a light soprano—though at present deficient in power, and more or less unequal throughout its register—is of extremely agreeable quality, and some of its natural tones, when enforced in the delivery, are exquisitely sweet and pure. That she has real musical feeling was evidenced on Tuesday night in more than one passage; and that she is by no means without the instinct of dramatic expression was rendered equally apparent. The character of Gilda, in *Rigoletto*, was a severe ordeal for an untied and unknown artist to brave, in presence of such an audience as that of the Royal Italian Opera, which even the vocalization of Madame Miolan Carvalho could not persuade for one instant to forget the incomparable performance of Angiolina Bosio, or force to believe that a singer with voice, taste, manner, and execution essentially French would ever prove entirely acceptable in a part ranking high among the highest creations of the modern Italian stage. That Mlle. Battu is just as eminently French in style as Mad. Carvalho, without Mad. Carvalho's practised experience in the vocal art, is undeniable, and that this would, in some degree, militate against her entire success was to be anticipated. But, with extreme youth in her favor, and the fact of her not having yet had time or opportunity for straining the capabilities and damaging the freshness of her voice by constant exposure to the musically artificial atmosphere of the Théâtre Lyrique, Mlle. Battu may, and doubtless will get over that peculiar mannerism which, of all national idiosyncracies, is the most antagonistic to the pure Italian method. Many parts in her performance were charmingly unaffected; some few (as, for example, the duet with Signor Mario in *Rigoletto's* garden) were marked by genuine sensibility; others by a natural ease, which, when further study shall have brought with it the self-composure that alone ensures to a singer unflinching command of resources, may help Mlle. Battu to become what at present she is far from being—a thorough artist. Her defects of style and execution were most conspicuously declared in the beautiful melody which Gilda sings before retiring to rest; but, as we have every hope that she will eradicate these in time, we shall not dwell upon them in detail. The audience, evidently prepossessed by the youthful grace and modest bearing of the young singer, warmly encouraged her throughout her arduous task; and we may, without hesitation, pronounce her first appearance a fair and legitimate success.

Next came here also a revival of Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable*, with one of the most brilliant audiences ever assembled within the walls of Covent Garden. Mme. Penco was Alice; Miolan Carvalho, the Princess; Herr Formes, Bertram; Neri Beraldi, Rimbauld; Tamberlik, Robert; and Mlle. Salvioni, Elena. It was nearly one o'clock when the curtain descended on the last scene. This was relieved the next night by *Il Barbiere*, as the other great Meyerbeer piece had been by *Don Giovanni*. Mario's Al-maviva, and Patti's Rosina—we know how charming they must have been! *Don Giovanni* was again repeated; then *Smanbula*; then the *Huguenots* again; and then still again *Don Giovanni*. The next novelty was to be *Don Pasquale*, with Patti and Mario.

NEW PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.—The fifth and last concert of the eleventh season took place June 18th. The programme included Cherubini's overture to *Elise*, Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, Mendelssohn's *Ruy Blas* overture; a violin Concerto by Spohr, played by Herr Becker; an arrangement for piano and orchestra, by Liszt, of Weber's *Polonaise*, played by Nicolas Rubenstein; and singing by Trebelli. Of these always successful concerts under Dr. Wylde, the *World* says:

His orchestra, a always first-rate, still further reinforced; his chorus numerous and thoroughly efficient;

his solo singers, including such artists as Mlle. Titiens, the sisters Carlotta and Barbara Marchisio, Mlle. Trebelli, &c.; his solo instrumentalists, such players as Herr Joachim, Herr Becker, M. Alfred Jael, Mr. J. F. Barnett, Herr N. Rubenstein, the brothers Edward and Henry Holmes, and Mad. Arabella Goddard; his programmes on each occasion well selected and rich, no less than varied in interest—one and all combined in rendering the New Philharmonic Concerts continually attractive. The greatest symphonies, overtures and concertos of the greatest have been introduced with rare discrimination; and as performance succeeded performance the attention of the musical public was more and more excited.

TRIENNIAL HANDEL FESTIVAL.—We have copied in a preceding portion of this week's journal a full report of the first two days of this great jubilee. Of the acoustical improvements of the orchestra of the Crystal Palace the *Musical World* says:

There was not that increase of power and accumulation of sound so confidently reckoned upon from the augmentation of the choral and instrumental force, and the new alterations and modifications in the orchestra. That a vast deal, nevertheless, has been gained there is no disputing. The acoustical improvements are very great. The sound from the orchestra is now transmitted direct—excepting where necessarily it becomes somewhat broken and disturbed at the sides by the intervening trellis-like projections of the gallery supports—into the body of the transept, and reaches the hearer without vibration or weakening in any place within the focus of the huge concave platform. The effect of the thorough enclosure of the orchestra is indeed surprising. The chorus has not only obtained greater distinctness and precision, but superior quality of tone, since the voices amalgamate more intimately and with greater smoothness than before, the choristers not being compelled to sing too loud. The improvement gained for the solo vocalists by the newly constructed orchestra is even more remarkable. The finest pianos of Mr. Sims Reeves are not lost as formerly, while his forte singing now in reality penetrates the building like a silver trumpet. This is an immense gain, seeing that one of the serious drawbacks to the Festival of 1857 and 1859 was the impossibility of hearing the soloists distinctly unless placed close to the orchestra. From the second gallery in the south transept, which in its distance from the orchestra embraces more than half the length of the entire transept, one is now enabled to hear the most delicate tones of the single voices, and the singers, knowing that, are at liberty to husband their resources to any extent they please. In short, thanks to Mr. Bowley, who has worked with a will and determination to secure this great and necessary accomplishment, the Handel Orchestra is, in its present state rendered as fit and capable for the execution of musical performances on a large scale as it could be made without injury to the building.

The public meeting for the performances of the two Quartets which have won the prizes offered by the Society of British Musicians, took place on Friday, the 20th ult., before a numerous audience. The following is the award of the umpires, Messrs. Molique, Potter, Joachim, Macfarren, and Mellon, all of whom attended on the occasion:

"In discharge of the responsibility, as umpires, you have confided to us, we award your first prize to the Quartet No. 19; because, of all you have submitted to us, this best fulfils the specialities of quartet-writing, and best carries out the principles of musical design, though it is not the richest nor the most original in ideas.

We award your second prize to No. 7, which has, in a less degree, the same qualities as No. 19. We particularly commend No. 10, with the motto 'Excelsior,' for its inventive vigor and dramatic feeling; but its irregularity of form, its orchestral character, and its being injudiciously written for the instruments, exclude it from the prizes placed at our disposal. We commend, also, No. 33, with the motto 'Sero sed serio,' and there are some others which show much talent, to whose composers we offer cordial encouragement."

The two prize quartets were admirably performed by Messrs. Joachim, Mellon, Webb, and Piatti; after which the chairman of the meeting, Mr. Charles E. Stephens, opened the sealed letters which accompanied these works, and the winner of the first prize proved to be Mr. Ebenezer Prout, and of the second, Mr. Edward Perry, both of whom were present and were greeted with loud applause. Votes of thanks to the umpires and the executants concluded the proceedings.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.—The concert of June 23d was for the benefit of the great violinist, ERNST, whose long illness has finally culminated in paralysis. It was very successful, and yielded £300 above all expenses.

The great feature was the quartet in B flat, for two violins, viola, and violoncello, composed by Herr Ernst, and performed by MM. Joachim, Laub, Molique, and Piatti. It is a work of exquisite fancy, in every movement showing the hand of a master. The execution was perfect. How, indeed, could it be otherwise on such an occasion, and with such players? Movement after movement was applauded with enthusiasm, and, at the end, the four distinguished musicians—who, in thus paying honor to a brother artist, did equal honor to themselves—were unanimously recalled. The same flattering reception awaited the *Elegie* (in C minor), one of the most pathetic pieces ever written—not merely by Herr Ernst, but by any composer who could be named.—In saying that his performance vividly reminded us of that of Herr Ernst himself, by its impassioned tenderness, its richness of tone, its depth and variety of expression, we have paid Herr Joachim the highest possible compliment. A rapturous encore was elicited. Three of those graceful and charming bagatelles, entitled *Pensées Fugitives*—the joint composition of Herr Ernst and M. Stephen Heller—intrusted to Mr. Charles Hallé and Herr Laub (a violinist by the way, whose visit to this country deserves more than a passing notice), made up that part of the selection to which Herr Ernst contributed as a composer. These brought the concert to an end with *éclat*. The other instrumental pieces were Schubert's Trio in B flat (MM. Hallé, Laub, and Davidoff), and Beethoven's solo sonata in D major (Op. 10), by Mr. Hallé. The vocal music was in excellent hands. To Mad. Sainton-Dolby was allotted to Mr. J. W. Davison's setting of Shelley's *Lament*, "Swifter far than summer's flight," and a new song entitled when I was young" (words and music from the pen of Mr. H. F. Chorley). She sang both charmingly, and was loudly encored in the first. Mr. Santley introduced Mr. Benedict's graceful *aria* "T'amo," and a ballad, in the German style, called "The wind" (Hecht), both in his best manner, and both to the evident satisfaction of his audience. Mr. Benedict accompanied the vocal music with even more than his usual care.

CHARITY ORATORIOS AT EXETER HALL.—The three oratorio performances lately given by Mr. and Mad. Goldschmidt, at Exeter Hall, after deducting the expenses (in each case amounting to about 500*l.*), produced the following results:—*Messiah*, May 14, 900*l.* 12*s.*; the *Creation*, May 28, 899*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.*; *Elijah*, June 4, 883*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.*; total, 2,684*l.* 2*s.* 0*d.* The net proceeds of the *Creation* have been paid to the Hospital for Consumption at Brompton; those of the *Elijah* have been divided equally between the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain and the Royal Society of Female Musicians. The profits arising from the performance of the *Messiah* were distributed in the following manner:—To the rectors of the Lambeth Society for the Employment of Needlewomen, 150*l.*; to Miss Stanley's Establishment, York Street, Westminster, 150*l.*; and 605*l.* 8*s.* to the Institution for Needlewomen, Hinde Street, Manchester Square.

REMARKABLY CHOICE VIOLINS.—A collection of fine Cremona instruments was yesterday brought to the hammer by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson of Leicester Square. Prominent amongst them were the well-known instruments of the late Count Castelbarco, of Milan, to whom M. Fétis has dedicated his "Memoire sur Stradivarius." The following were the more remarkable lots, with the prices at which they sold:—Lot 1, a violin by Stradivarius, date 1712, 70*l.*; lot 2, a violin by Stradivarius, date 1699, 56*l.*; lot 3, a tenor by Stradivarius, date 1715, 100*l.*; lot 6, a violin by Stradivarius, date 1701, 135*l.*; lot 8, a violin by Stradivarius, date 1685, 135*l.*; lot 9, a violin by Stradivarius, date 1713, 90*l.*; lot 12, a violin by Nicolas Amati, 39 guineas; lot 13, a violin, by Andreas Amati, 36 guineas; lot 26, a violoncello by Stradivarius, date 1697, 210*l.*; lot 28, a violoncello by Stradivarius, dated 1687, 115*l.*; lot 30, a violoncello by Nicolas Amati, date 1687, 130*l.*; lot 31, an autograph letter of the celebrated Stradivarius (fac-similed in Fétis Memoir of him), 8*l.* The seventeen articles of this collection produced the large sum of 1,239*l.* 15*s.* There were some other fine instruments in the sale, particularly a grand Amati, jewelled at the corners, which sold for 60*l.*; and a violin by Guarnerius, which produced 38 guineas. There was a large attendance of amateurs and professors. The total amount realized for the day's sale was 1,717*l.* 11*s.*

Special Notices.

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Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

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